IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the following paragraphs of the Specification as indicated below:

[0020] The seat belt restraint system further includes a lap belt comprising an outboard lap belt segment 18 and an inboard lap belt segment 20. The upper ends of the lap belt segments 18,20 are fitted with mating buckle/latch assemblies 22 that are releasably securable to one another in order to fasten the lap belt around the occupant's pelvis, as is well known in the restraints art. The opposite, lower end of the outboard lap belt segment 18 extends from a retraction point 24 adjacent the rear of the outboard side of the seat cushion 16. The retraction point 24 comprises a housing 26 (not shown in Figures 2 and 3) containing a belt retractor 28 which engages the outboard lap belt segment 18 and provides for adjustment of the length of the belt for varying-sized seated occupants and for properly positioning of the seat belt restraint system, as is well known in the art. The ~~housing 26~~retractor 28 may also ~~contain~~ incorporate a belt pretensioner (shown schematically at 29) and/or a load limiter of the type well known in the restraints art. The inboard lap belt segment 20 extends from a retraction point adjacent the rear of the inboard side of the seat cushion 16. The inboard retraction point comprises a housing (not shown) and retractor (not shown) substantially similar to that on the outboard side. Alternatively, one or both of the lap belt retractors 28 ~~and/or pretensioners 29~~ may be located within or behind the seat 10, or may be secured to some vehicle structure adjacent the seat 10 which adequately supports seat belt loads, as is commonly known

in the art. It is also possible to utilize a single retractor ~~and/or pretensioner~~ that engages both lap belt segments 18,20.

[0021] The seat belt restraint system further includes an outboard shoulder belt 36 and an inboard shoulder belt 38 extending downwardly from the upper portion of the seat back 12 adjacent to the outboard and inboard sides of the seat back respectively. The upper ends of the shoulder belt 36,38 are preferably engaged by belt retractors (shown schematically at 37) that may be located inside of or adjacent the seat back 12. Belt pretensioners and/or load limiters (not shown) of the type well known in the art may also be provided for the shoulder belts 36,38.

[0031] Upon sufficient vehicle deceleration ~~or other indication of a current or impending crash,~~ the guide member 50 becomes detached from the seat cushion 16 and the lap belt pretensioner 29 ~~and/or~~ associated with retractor 28 is activated to tighten the lap belt 18 and draw it to the crash restraint position shown in Figure 5. The guide member 50 is completely detached from the seat 10 in the crash restraint position, and is supported only by its engagement with the lap belt 18.

Please amend the claims as indicated below:

1. (Currently Amended) A vehicle occupant restraint system comprising:

a seat having a seat cushion, a first side, and a second side;

a lap belt extending between a first point adjacent the first side of the seat and a second point adjacent the second side of the seat, the lap belt passing above the seat cushion between the first and second points;

at least one belt guide disposed adjacent the first side of the seat and engaging the lap belt, the belt guide having a first position relative to the seat wherein it holds the lap belt in a comfort configuration, and the belt guide movable to a second position relatively rearward with respect to the first position wherein it holds the lap belt in a crash restraint configuration; and

a restraints control module operative to receive inputs from at least one of a pre-crash sensor and a crash sensor and to command the belt guide to move from the first position to the second position in response to said inputs ~~when at least one sensor input to the restraints control module indicates that a crash has occurred or is imminent~~.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 further comprising a track disposed adjacent the first side of the seat, the belt guide slidingly engaged with the track and movable therealong between the first and second positions.

4. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 further comprising an actuator for moving the belt guide between the first and second positions.

5. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 4 wherein the actuator is powered by a pyrotechnic device.

6. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 4 wherein the actuator is powered by compressed gas.

7. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 4 wherein the actuator is powered by a mechanical spring.

8. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 4 wherein the actuator is electrically powered.

9. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 wherein the belt guide is attached to the seat when in the first position and is detached from the seat to allow movement to the second position.

10. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 further comprising a belt pretensioner disposed adjacent the seat and engaging at least one end of the lap belt, the pretensioner operative to tighten the lap belt around an occupant

of the seat.

11. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 further comprising at least one shoulder belt.

12. (Previously Presented) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 wherein the lap belt when in the crash restraint configuration extends generally directly between a hip of an occupant of the seat and the first point, and when in the comfort configuration extends generally vertically.

13. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 1 wherein the lap belt comprises a first segment extending from a first retraction point adjacent the first side of the seat cushion and a second lap belt segment extending from a second retraction point adjacent the second side of the seat cushion, the first and second segments detachably connectable with one another at a center latching point above the seat cushion, and each of the first and second segments having a belt guide movable between the first position and the second position.

14. (Currently Amended) A vehicle occupant restraint system comprising:

a seat having a seat cushion, a first side, and a second side;

a first lap belt segment extending from a first retraction point adjacent the first side of the seat;

a second lap belt segment extending from a second retraction point adjacent the second side of the seat and detachably connectable with the first lap belt segment at a center latching point above the seat cushion in order to be fastened around a seat occupant;

first and second belt guides disposed adjacent the first and second sides of the seat respectively and engaging the first and second lap belt segments respectively, each of the first and second belt guides having a first position forward of the respective first and second retraction points wherein the first and second belt guides engage the respective first and second lap belt segments and cause the lap belt segments to assume a comfort configuration wherein the lap belt segments are relatively vertical as they ~~extends~~ toward the center latching point from the respective first and second belt guide, and each belt guide movable to a second position rearward from the first position and allowing the respective first and second lap belt segments to assume a crash restraint configuration wherein the lap belt segments ~~extends~~ in an upward and forward orientation toward the center latching point from the first and second belt guides; and

a restraints control module operative to receive inputs from at least one of a pre-crash sensor and a crash sensor and to command the belt guides to move from the first positions to the second position in response to said inputs ~~when at least one sensor input to the restraints control module indicates that a crash has occurred or is imminent~~.

15. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system

according to claim 14 further comprising at least one belt pretensioner operative with at least one of the first and the second lap belt segments.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Original) The vehicle occupant restraint system according to claim 14 further comprising at least one shoulder belt.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of restraining an occupant in a seat of a motor vehicle having a seat and a lap belt having a first end fixed adjacent a first side of the seat and a second point fixed adjacent a second side of the seat, the method comprising the steps of:

providing at least one belt guide disposed adjacent the first side of the seat and engaging the lap belt, the belt guide having a first position relative to the seat wherein it holds the lap belt in a comfort configuration and a second position relatively rearward with respect to the first position wherein it holds the lap belt in a crash restraint configuration; and

moving the belt guide from the first position to the second position in response to inputs from at least one of a pre-crash sensor and a crash sensor~~a determination that a motor vehicle crash has occurred or is imminent~~.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 18 wherein the step of moving the belt guide comprises sliding the belt guide along a track disposed adjacent the first side of the seat.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 18 wherein the step of moving the belt guide comprises detaching the belt guide from the seat.